A1880-14 8/86

Highlights of Official Child Neglect and Abuse Reporting 1984

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR
PROTECTING CHILDREN, INC.

Highlights of Official Child Neglect and Abuse Reporting 1984

Published by:
The American Humane Association
9725 East Hampden Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80231

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Acknowledgements

This report is a product of the relationship between The American Humane Association and the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect.

Special recognition is given the state liaisons and those protective service workers throughout the country whose efforts provide the data on reports of child abuse and neglect.

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This report was made possible by Grant No. 90-CA-862 from the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, Children's Bureau, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Office of Human Development Services, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its contents should not be construed as official policy of the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect or any other agency of the Federal government.

Introduction

This report represents an updated profile of officially reported child maltreatment in the United States and participating jurisdictions as provided through the National Study on Child Neglect and Abuse Reporting. The National Study is a project conducted since 1974 by the American Association for Protecting Children, a division of The American Humane Association, and funded through the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect of the Department of Health and Human Services.

The information in this report is derived from official reports of child maltreatment documented by child protective services (CPS) agencies nationwide during 1984. It focuses on the nature and volume of reporting to CPS agencies, on the characteristics of the reported cases, and on the nature of the response on the part of CPS agencies to reported cases. (Identifying information, such as names or addresses, is not collected.)

Since the first national analysis of reporting statistics was issued in 1976, this information has served to keep a diverse audience of administrators, planners and researchers informed on the status of reported child maltreatment. Special analyses of the data at the state and local levels have provided a useful tool to CPS administrators in evaluating their programs and in more informed decision-making for the provision of child protective services. Other special analyses performed in conjunction with the needs of a variety of researchers have enhanced overall knowledge with respect to child abuse and neglect.

As a summary of reporting at the national level, only the general data categories are presented. The data base for the National Study contains considerable detail for each category, and the information can be made available to interested persons.[1]

Finally, it is important to point out that for inclusion in any of the percentage distributions or cross tabulations presented in this report, each jurisdiction's data must meet systematically applied compatibility criteria. The criteria are applied so that the data included in each analysis will share a common definitional base. For this reason, the number of cases included in each table varies as a function of the number of jurisdictions submitting comparable data. In addition, the particular data elements that constitute the various data categories are presented in Appendix A. The reader is encouraged to consult this listing while reading this report.[2]

Within this report certain tables were prepared which compare data for 1984 with corresponding data for 1983, where changes between 1983 and 1984 are noteworthy. When such comparisons are not made, the reader may assume that 1983 and 1984 data are relatively consistent.

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[1] Inquiries about the availability of data should be directed to the American Association for Protecting Children in Denver, Colorado, or to the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect Clearinghouse in Washington, D.C.

[2] Detailed information on the methodology of the National Study may be obtained in the publication ***Trends in Child Abuse and Neglect: A National Perspective*** (AHA, 1984).

Characteristics of Reporting to Child Protective Services

National Reporting Over Time

Although not all states and jurisdictions contribute case level data to the National Study data base, all states have been surveyed in order to obtain data on report totals, sources of the totals, and selected characteristics of the reporting systems. This survey information provides the basis for the estimates of reporting levels and rates contained in this section.

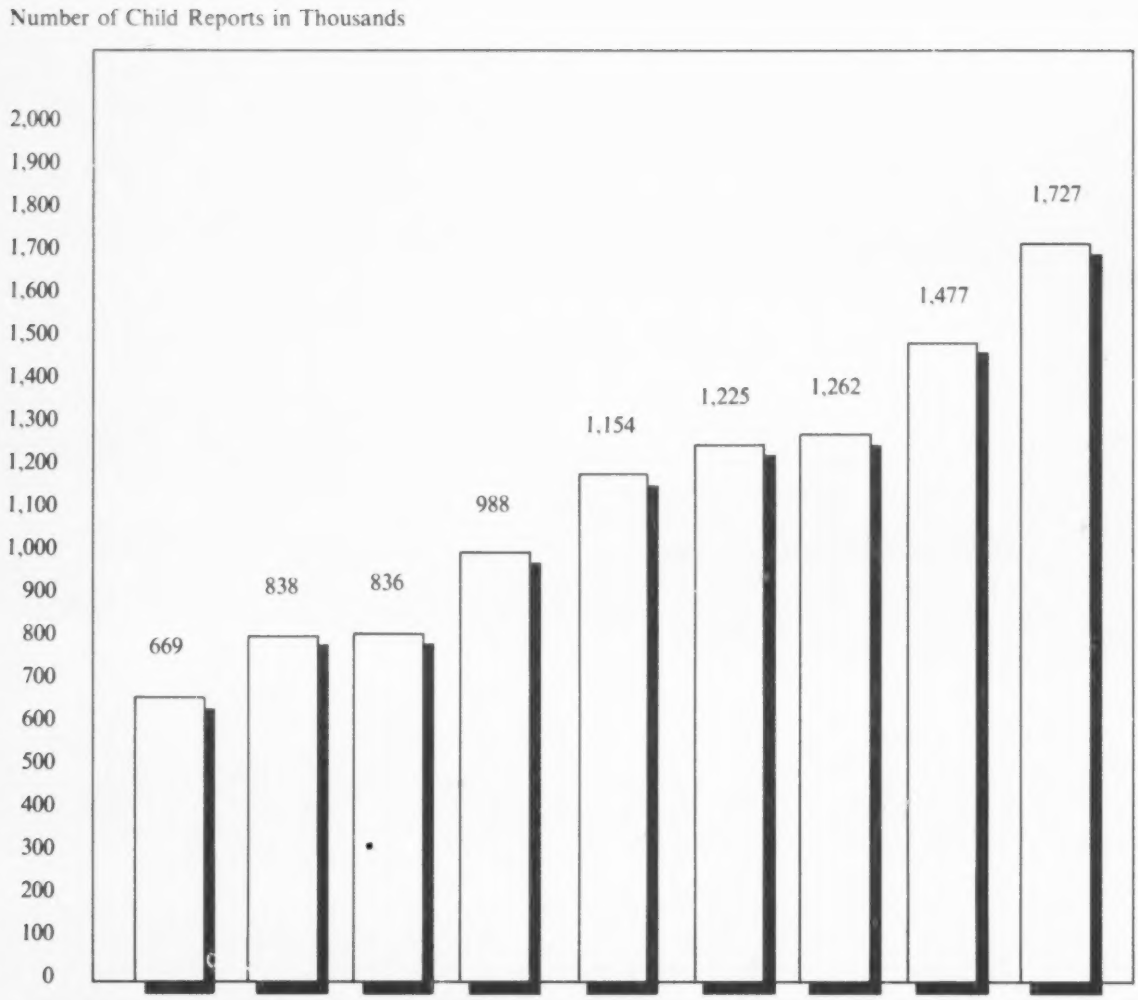
In 1984 an estimated 1,726,649 children were reported for child abuse and neglect to child protective services agencies in the United States and participating jurisdictions. The rate of reporting is estimated at 27.3 children per 1,000 U.S. child population in 1984. Similarly, an estimated 1,024,178 families were reported in 1984. The total number of families is a general indicator of the level of activity on the part of CPS, each roughly corresponding to the number of investigations performed.

Another important consideration is that with the exception of five states, these totals include duplicate reports. That is to say, a particular child and/or family may be reported more than once in a given year and the totals presented here reflect that duplication.

Of particular concern to policy makers in the child protective services system is not only the absolute levels of reporting but also the extent to which reporting has increased over time. Information on child report level and rate changes respectively are provided in Figures 1 and 2.

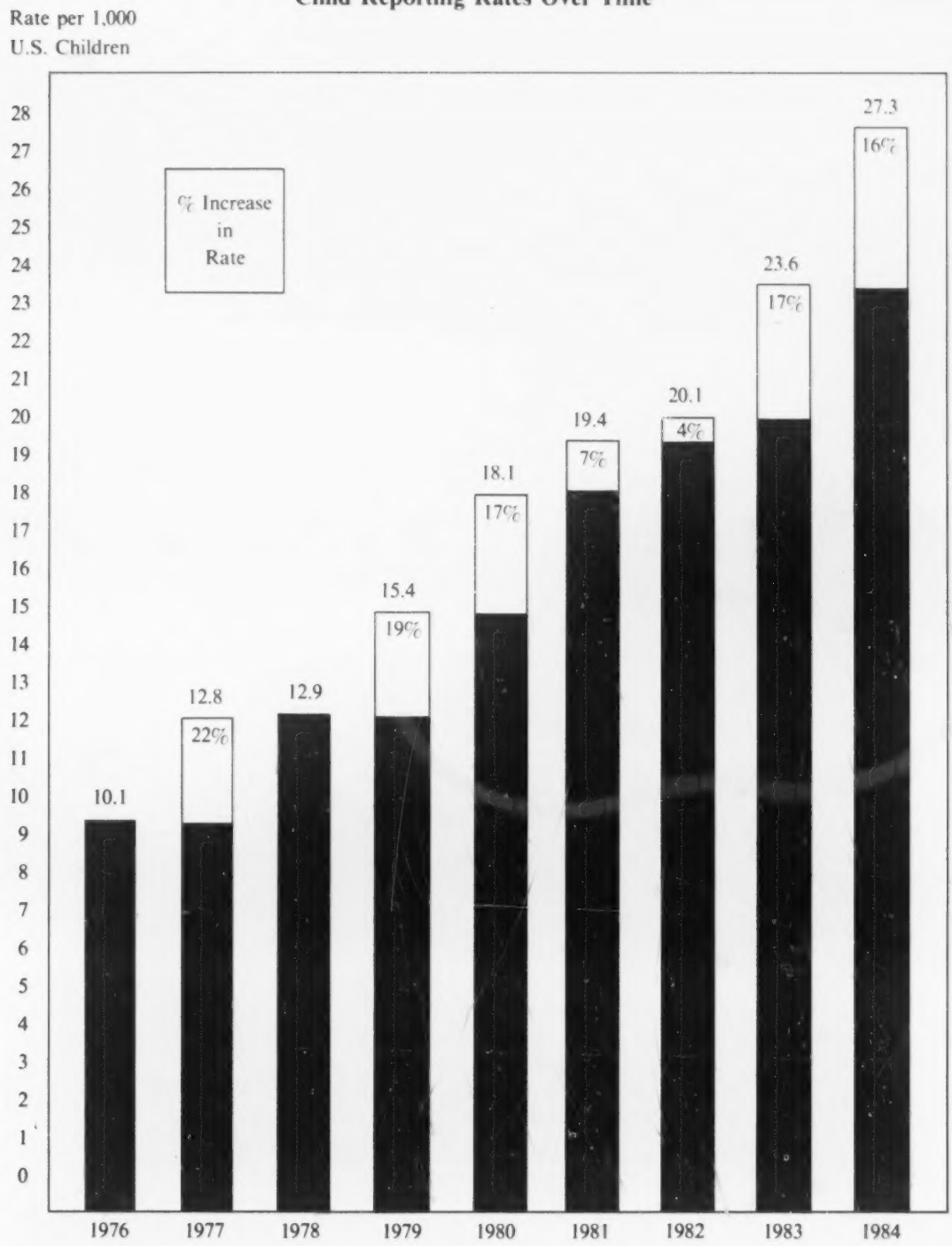
Overall child reporting levels have increased 158 percent between 1976 and 1984, the only years for which this information is available. Although report levels have increased overall, the rate of increase declined between 1976 and 1982, as indicated in Figure 1. In 1983 and again in 1984 reporting has increased by approximately 16 to 17 percent in each year. As might be expected, changes in child reporting rates (defined as the number of children reported per 1000 children in the U.S.) as shown in Figure 2 also follow a similar pattern over time. The figures for percentage change from year to year for Figures 1 and 2 are not equal since in Figure 1 only the change in the level of reports is portrayed, while Figure 2 reflects changes both in the levels of reports and in the U.S. child population.

Figure 1
National Estimates of Child Abuse and Neglect Reports
1976-1984



Child totals include the 50 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, U. S. Virgin Islands, Guam and Marianas

Figure 2
Child Reporting Rates Over Time



Child totals from each of 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia

Although the relationship between official statistics and the actual incidence of child maltreatment can only be estimated, two important facts are relatively clear. First, it is apparent that increases in resources and activity on the part of CPS have been necessary in response to increased reporting. Secondly, current estimates of the incidence of child abuse remain significantly larger than those based on reporting.

Recent research by Richard Gelles and Murray Strauss, in conjunction with Louis Harris and Associates (1985) postulates a 47 percent decline in very severe violence toward children since 1975. The results are based on comparison of samples from 1975 and 1985 from intact families involving children from ages 3 to 17. Based on the same data, an estimated 1.5 million children aged 0 to 17 from two-parent families were subjected to very severe violence in 1985 (Strauss, 1985). It is obvious that including children from single-parent households will increase this estimate and as such it can be considered conservative. Although National Study maltreatment definitions are not exactly consistent with those employed by Gelles and Strauss, in as much as injury may not necessarily be the consequence of severe violence, the comparable estimate from the reporting statistics is that between 149,000 and 219,000 children were injured in 1984. Even taking the upper estimate this would imply that only one child in seven who is physically injured is reported. In the possible presence of declining incidence and despite the tremendous increase in reporting, the CPS system still has a long way to go if the goal of providing protection to even the seriously abused is to be achieved. The Gelles and Strauss survey does not address sexual abuse or neglect which, if taken together, are the predominant forms of child maltreatment encountered by CPS agencies.

Report Totals and Involved Child Reporting Rates by Jurisdiction

Table 1 shows 1984 family totals and numbers of involved children within each of the jurisdictions or as estimated by national study staff based on the information provided. With the exception of one state, these totals include both substantiated and unsubstantiated cases. The involved child reporting rates for 1982, 1983 and 1984 are based on provisional child population estimates for each year from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1985, P-25, 970).

There is considerable variation in involved child reporting rates among the jurisdictions, from a low of 6.9 to a high of 55.1 children per 1,000 child population in 1984.

In general, these rates represent total reporting for each state; however, reports from special jurisdictions within some states, such as Native American reservations, may not be included. Among the reasons for the variation is that child protective services reporting systems vary both with respect to policy and practice. The level of public awareness and proactive efforts on the part of a community and the media related to identifying children at risk of maltreatment also affects reporting rates.

It is not possible to draw a connection between reporting rates and actual incidence of maltreatment. By definition, maltreatment that is not reported is not accounted for in reporting statistics. Thus, it would be inappropriate to surmise from these statistics that Maine, at 44.2 children reported per thousand children, has more child maltreatment than Illinois with 21.7 children reported per thousand children. It is possible to conclude that proportionately more children in Maine were identified through their particular reporting system.

Table 1
1984 Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Totals and Rates

	Number of Families Reported	Number of Children Reported	Child Report Rates: Involved Children Per 1,000 U.S. Children		
			1984	1983	1982
National	1,024,178	1,726,649	27.3	23.6	20.1
State					
Alabama	18,303[7,A]	28,407[1,A]	25.59	21.04	21.24
Alaska	4,544[7,B]	7,052[2,B]	43.53	32.45	22.55
Arizona	12,749[3,B]	19,788[7,B]	23.12	N/A	N/A
Arkansas	12,558[2,A]	20,974[2,A]	32.17	25.89	23.34
California	138,061[3,A]	250,271[3,A]	37.57	35.24	33.71
Colorado	8,640[3,A]	13,410[7,A]	15.67	N/A	N/A
Connecticut	10,031[1,A]	17,015[7,A]	22.78	18.55	15.51
Delaware	3,811[2,A]	7,887[5,A]	50.88	52.66	N/A
District of Columbia	2,299[10,A]	3,878[10,A]	28.94	49.27	39.74
Florida	56,429[7,A]	87,582[2,A]	34.88	39.33	33.25
Georgia	21,359[1,A]	36,229[7,A]	22.20	21.70	18.61
Hawaii	2,877[5,A]	3,971[2,A]	13.84	11.21	10.78
Idaho	7,324[4,B]	11,368[7,B]	35.30	N/A	20.00
Illinois	39,233[2,A]	67,058[2,A]	21.70	20.55	19.58
Indiana	18,658[7,A]	28,958[2,A]	19.15	18.20	15.53
Iowa	15,804[2,A]	25,018[2,A]	31.95	29.52	28.14
Kansas	14,706[7,A]	22,825[3,A]	35.01	32.70	29.65
Kentucky	19,045[2,A]	32,713[2,A]	31.76	31.50	29.23
Louisiana	20,943[3,A]	34,783[3,A]	25.65	24.61	28.10
Maine	5,428[2,A]	13,570[5,A]	44.20	38.54	28.06
Maryland	5,204[7,A]	8,077[4,A]	7.44	13.30	N/A
Massachusetts	28,119[1,A]	46,396[2,A]	33.99	26.31	20.40
Michigan	41,352[2,A]	90,627[2,A]	36.45	34.33	32.10
Minnesota	14,109[7,A]	23,673[9,A]	21.08	14.36	12.63
Mississippi	4,487[2,A]	6,964[7,A]	8.74	N/A	N/A
Missouri	39,709[2,A]	72,446[2,A]	55.13	49.08	42.26
Montana	4,049[2,A]	5,126[2,A]	21.72	18.56	18.80
Nebraska	6,083[2,A]	8,230[5,A]	18.58	12.29	13.32
Nevada	6,066[2,A]	8,795[5,A]	37.59	32.01	36.07
New Hampshire	3,955[1,A]	6,708[7,A]	26.62	N/A	N/A
New Jersey	26,098[1,A]	44,368[2,A]	23.94	14.12	10.06
New Mexico	8,353[1,A]	14,000[1,A]	32.18	N/A	N/A
New York	81,093[2,A]	134,699[2,A]	30.69	21.72	N/A
North Carolina	17,970[2,A]	26,201[2,A]	16.38	17.00	16.84
North Dakota	2,856[4,B]	4,431[5,B]	22.38	19.32	19.37
Ohio	56,000[1,A]	94,640[1,A]	32.87	N/A	N/A
Oklahoma	11,693[7,A]	18,149[2,A]	19.71	16.50	16.66

Table 1
1984 Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Totals and Rates (continued)

State	Number of Families Reported	Number of Children Reported	Child Report Rates: Involved Children Per 1,000 U.S. Children 1984	1983	1982
Oregon	10,655[7,A]	16,538[8,A]	23.33	N/A	N/A
Pennsylvania	12,943[7,A]	20,088[2,A]	6.90	5.39	5.22
Rhode Island	5,470[3,A]	8,490[7,A]	37.57	N/A	N/A
South Carolina	14,125[1,A]	23,958[7,A]	25.84	16.75	25.45
South Dakota	6,536[2,A]	10,145[7,A]	49.25	27.34	25.24
Tennessee	20,531[1,B]	41,063[2,B]	32.98	29.70	25.83
Texas	64,313[2,A]	105,882[2,A]	22.45	21.35	20.21
Utah	8,945[2,A]	14,967[5,A]	23.95	N/A	N/A
Vermont	2,144[2,A]	3,076[5,A]	22.13	18.91	N/A
Virginia	27,603[7,A]	42,842[2,A]	30.00	30.09	28.23
Washington	30,072[2,A]	42,352[2,A]	36.51	31.98	36.43
West Virginia	11,183[4,A]	17,357[7,A]	32.69	N/A	N/A
Wisconsin	11,083[7,A]	17,202[2,A]	13.47	7.46	6.90
Wyoming	2,346[2,A]	3,502[2,A]	21.89	20.30	16.30
Guam	390[3,A]	580[1,A]	N/A	N/A	N/A
Puerto Rico	5,526[6,A]	11,831[6,A]	N/A	N/A	N/A
Virgin Islands	225[6,A]	349[7,A]	N/A	N/A	N/A
Marianas Islands	90[7,A]	140[6,A]	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table Footnotes: The first footnote number, or source code, represents the information source for the number of reports, while the second footnote, or duplication code, indicates whether the report is duplicated. For example, under the column "Number of Families Reported," Alabama is reported as 18,302[7,A], which corresponds to source code 7 and duplication code A.

Source Codes:

[1] Estimate provided by state.

[2] Number provided by state computer system.

[3] Number based on a hand count of reports at the state level.

[4] Number based on counts of reports made by local jurisdictions, e.g. counties.

[5] Estimate computed based on the ratio of children to families or families to children from case reports available to the national study for this state.

[6] Estimate is based on last year's data as no data are available for 1984.

[7] Estimate computed based on a nationally derived ratio of children to families or families to children. In 1984, the conversion factor from families to children is 1.552 and from children to families 0.644.

[8] Data are provided by the state, but it is not known if the number is an estimate or exact count.

[9] Only data on founded cases are available from this state.

[10] Data are based on the number of cases submitted to the national study as counts by the state are not available.

Duplication Codes:

[A] Duplicated Reports.

[B] Unduplicated reports.

Information Sources

In general, states are able to provide estimates or counts of the number of families or children which were reported in 1984 (see Appendix C). Among all U.S. states and territories, 69 percent are able to provide official information on the number of families reported (source codes 1 to 4 and 8) and 58 percent are able to provide this information for children. For all states it is possible to estimate either children or families given the information provided by that state or in combination with data provided by other states. Either of these totals is more meaningful than total reports. It has become more problematic to consistently evaluate or interpret the meaning of total reports, as they represent both children and families. As a consequence the national reporting study as of 1984 is providing estimates for both the number of children and families rather than simply reports. Because of readily available estimates of U.S. child population for each state, child reporting is the best data for use in comparisons over time.

Duplication

A duplicated report exists when a family or child previously reported is enumerated again as part of the total reports during the calendar year. Potentially, a family or child can be re-reported at any time either during or after an investigation, also a family can be re-reported regardless of whether it is currently being served by CPS. Only 5 out of 55 states do not provide duplicated report totals whereas only four states were able to provide both duplicated and unduplicated totals in 1984.

Without a greater number of states providing data on unduplicated reporting, it is difficult to reliably estimate the extent of the duplication, but it is estimated at from 5 percent to 29 percent of reports based on the information from the four states which provide data on both duplicated and unduplicated reports.

Reporting and the National Study Data Base

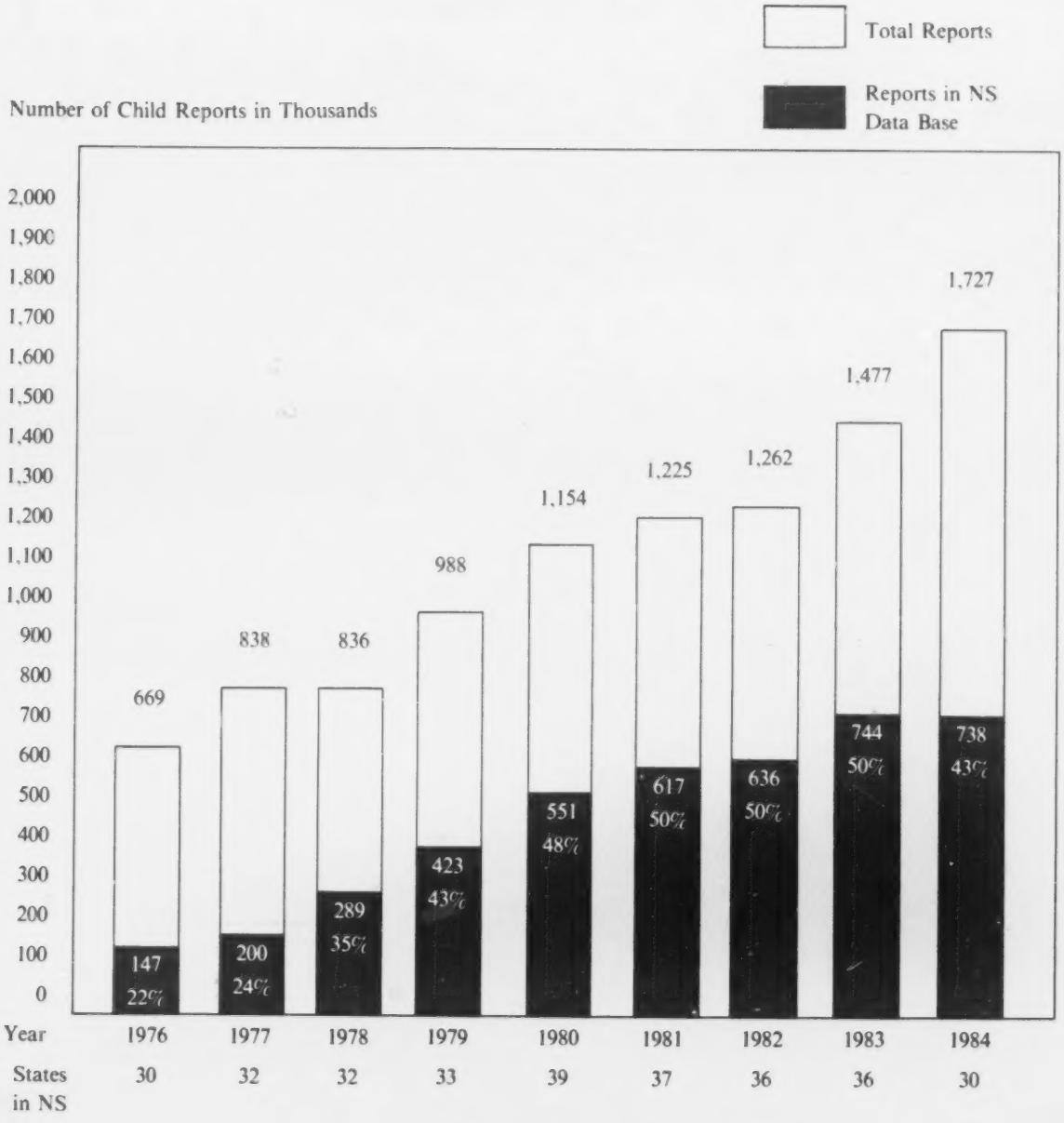
In 1984, 30 states and territories representing 61 percent of the total U.S. child population provided the National Study with case data in the form of computer generated files. A listing of these case data participants and the number of reports from each is provided in Appendix B. The remainder of this report is based on the analysis of data from this data base.

Figure 3, displays the relationship between the number of children reported for each year since 1976 and the proportion of those children for whom case data are available in the National Study data base. As can be seen, roughly 40 to 50 percent of the children reported and 30 to 39 states have been a part of the data file since 1979.

Of some interest in considering the National Study data base is the extent to which the data it portrays are representative of the reporting phenomenon throughout the country. It does not necessarily follow that the specific characteristics of children, families and CPS response described in the remainder of this report are representative of national experience. Most of the distributions discussed in the following sections are based not on all states which provide case data, but on those with definitionally compatible data. Further, some of the variables discussed are probably much more sensitive to local differences in policy and practice than are others. An examination of reporting rates from states which provide case data compared to those which do not indicates that the distributions are similar (see Appendix C).

In examining the following tables it is useful to consider that units of analysis may be children, cases, perpetrators, caretakers, caretaker combinations and relationships. For cross tabular tables, information on one variable may be available for a state while information on the second variable is not available. These factors singly or in combination contribute to the variation in the underlying number of "cases" or N's associated with each figure or table.

Figure 3
Child Reporting Over Time



Child totals from each of the 50 states, and the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, U. S. Virgin Islands, Guam and Marianas

Type of Report

"Type of Report" serves to summarize what is reported to child protective services agencies from the originating source. Neglect, alone or in combination with abuse, is the most frequently reported type, being reported in approximately 58 percent of all cases of child abuse and neglect. Abuse is reported in approximately 50 percent of all cases, where abuse generally included reports of both physical and sexual maltreatment.

As indicated on Table 2, the 1984 distribution of reports represents a change from the 1983 report configuration and is part of a continuing trend marked by the relative or proportional decline of neglect cases in CPS investigative caseloads.

Table 2
Type of Report

Type of Report	Percentage of Reports 1984 (N=286,801)	1983 (N=269,818)
Abuse	33.5%	27.9%
Neglect	42.1%	45.7%
Abuse and Neglect	16.3%	19.0%
Unspecified Type of Report[1]	8.1%	7.4%

[1] In 1983, this category also included some "at risk" reports which were recategorized for 1984. These cases represented only one percent of reports in 1983.

Each type of report category includes cases which are substantiated, unsubstantiated, at risk or have an unspecified substantiation status (i.e., unable to locate, lack of evidence, etc.).

Source of Report

As Table 3 shows, the types of individuals who report suspected maltreatment to child protective services agencies are evenly divided between professional sources and nonprofessionals. It is interesting to note that it is the victim's own friends, neighbors and relatives who constitute the single largest group of reporters. This represents a significant level of community concern, especially since, typically, nonprofessionals are not required by law to report, whereas most professional groups are required to report. It may be assumed, however, that the nonprofessionals have the greater opportunity for multiple observations of the child.

The distribution of report sources between professional and nonprofessional sources has shown some changes over time. Between 1981 and 1984, professional sources have increased from 46 percent to 50 percent of all sources of report.

Table 3
Source of Report
(N=341,330 Reports)

Source	Percent of All Reports	
Professionals:		
Medical Personnel	11.3%	
School Personnel	13.5%	
Law Enforcement	10.7%	
Social Services	11.9%	
Child Care Providers	2.3%	
Total Professionals:		**49.6%**
Nonprofessionals:		
Friends, Neighbors, Relatives, Self[1]	36.2%	
Anonymous	12.4	
Other Sources[2]	1.9%	
Total Nonprofessionals:		**50.4%**
Total All Sources	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

[1] "Self" includes both victim and perpetrators and accounts for about two percent of all reports.
[2] "Other Sources" includes, as examples, landlords and religious personnel, individuals not readily categorized by the other standard categories.

Substantiation Status

Based on data from 19 states, a national estimate of 727 thousand reported children were considered substantiated for child abuse and neglect by CPS systems.[3] This represents approximately 42 percent of the 1.7 million children who were reported in 1984.

Although the terminology and definitions of substantiation vary considerably across states and counties, the concept of substantiation is that the abuse/neglect has some basis in fact and the service response will be related to this finding. Unfortunately, cases which are unsubstantiated may actually involve an incident of child maltreatment, making it extremely misleading to use substantiation statistics as a measure of the "true" amount of reported child abuse and neglect. For example, 90 percent of substantiated cases in the 1984 National Study data base were opened for protective services, whereas, 16 percent of unsubstantiated cases were opened.

There is also a substantial difference in the source of report between substantiated and unsubstantiated reports. Approximately 60 percent of substantiated reports are received from professional sources, whereas only 40 percent of unsubstantiated cases are from these sources. This difference reflects the fact that evidence from professional sources may be the basis for substantiation decisions, as well as potential differences in case severity.

[3] This estimate is based on survey results rather than case data.

Characteristics of Child Protective Services Cases

Summary Profile of Reported Families

Table 4 provides an overview of the major demographic characteristics of families who are reported to child protective services agencies. Note that a "caretaker" is defined as an adult who has full-time responsibility for a child and would not include, for example, babysitters or teachers. Also note that most — at least 89 percent — of the perpetrators are also the caretakers.

Table 4
Summary Profile of Families Reported for Child Maltreatment

Descriptors	1984	Trends/Comments 1976-1984
Involved Child Descriptors		
Age		
(N = 722,704 Children)		
Average Age	7.2 years	Gradual decline from 7.8 to 7.1 years of age from 1976 to 1983. Slight increase in 1984.
Sex		
(N = 727,292 Children)		
Males	48.0%	Decline in proportion of males reported from 50.0% in 1976 to 48.0% in 1984.
Females	52.0%	
Race		
(N = 505,837 Children)		
White	67.0%	Relatively consistent over time.
Black	20.8%	
Hispanic	9.6%	
Other	2.6%	
Caretaker Descriptors		
Age		
(N = 238,232 Caretakers)		
Average Age	31.9 years	Fairly stable over time with a slight gradual decline in average age from 1976 to 1982. Slight increase from 31.4 years in 1982 to 31.9 in 1984.
Sex		
(N = 295,624 Caretakers)		
Males	38.5%	Gradual decline in proportion of male caretakers from 1976 to 1982. Increase from 36.2% male in 1982 to 38.5% in 1984.
Females	61.5%	

Table 4
Summary Profile of Families Reported for Child Maltreatment (continued)

Descriptors	1984	Trends/Comments 1976-1984
Race		
(N = 245,374 Caretakers)		
White	74.5%	Relatively consistent over time.
Black	17.5%	
Hispanic	5.5%	
Other	2.5%	
Family Descriptors		
Caretaker Composition		
(N = 186,606 Family Reports)		
Single Female Headed Families	37.4%	Gradual increase between 1976 and 1982 with declines from 1982 (43.4%) to 1984 (37.4%).
Children in Household		
(N = 180,057 Reports)		
Average Number of Children in Household	2.17	Gradual decline since 1976, but relatively consistent since 1979.
Public Assistance Status		
(N = 87,600 Reports)		
Receiving Public Assistance	48.3%	No obvious pattern over time, but has increased from 1982 (43.4%) to 1984 (48.3%).
Perpetrator Descriptors		
Age		
(N = 344,172 Perpetrators)		
Average Age	31.5 years	Relatively consistent over time.
Sex		
(N = 395,898 Perpetrators)		
Males	43.0%	1984 increase in percentage males from 40.4% in 1983 to 43.0%. Relatively consistent in prior years.
Females	57.0%	
Race		
(N = 361,110 Perpetrators)		
White	69.9%	Relatively consistent over time.
Black	19.1%	
Hispanic	9.3%	
Other	1.9%	

Differences between the characteristics of children and families reported for child abuse and neglect and the U.S. population follow the patterns of prior years. The race distribution of the children involved differs from that for all U.S. children in that 67 percent of the involved children are white, compared to an estimated 81 percent of all U.S. children in 1984. (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1985, P-25, 965).[4] Age also differs such that the average age of involved children is 7.2 years versus 8.6 for all U.S. children. (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1985, P-25, 965) The over-representation of young children can also be seen in Table 5 below.

Table 5
Comparison of Age Distributions

Age	All U.S. Children[1]	Child Abuse and Neglect Involved Children[2]
0-5	34%	43%
6-11	31%	33%
12-17	35%	24%
Total	**100%**	**100%**

[1] Source is the U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Estimates of the Population of the United States by Age, Sex and Race: 1980 to 1984," Series P-25, 965; 1985.
[2] Source is the National Study on Child Neglect and Abuse Reporting data base.

The over-representation of younger and minority children has been a common characteristic of reporting data since at least 1976. Among possible reasons for this are investigative priorities, perceptions of risk by reporting sources, as well as conditions associated with poverty and unemployment. (cf. Pelton, 1981, Hampton and Newberger, 1985, McPherson and Garcia, 1983).

Thirty-seven percent of the reported families are headed by a single female caretaker, compared to 23 percent of all U.S. families with children under age 18 (U.S. Census Bureau, 1985, P-20, 398).

The proportion of all reported families who are receiving public assistance is 48 percent, compared to only about 12 percent of all U.S. families. (U.S. Census Bureau, 1985, ***Statistical Abstract of the U.S.*** - 1985).

Characteristics by Substantiation Status

A comparison of case characteristics between substantiated and unsubstantiated cases indicates that children in substantiated cases tend to be slightly older and are more often female and white than children associated with unsubstantiated cases. Caretaker and perpetrator descriptors follow the pattern of differences in child descriptors in terms of age and race. The most substantial difference, however, is in perpetrator sex. By comparison with all reports where male perpetrators account for 43 percent, they account for 46 percent of perpetrators in substantiated cases and 40 percent of perpetrators in unsubstantiated cases. This finding may relate to higher substantiation rates among the types of maltreatments associated with proportionately more male perpetrators: sexual maltreatment and physical injury.

[4] The actual percentages for the various race categories cannot be compared because the census data do not reflect a distinction between Hispanic and black and white, whereas the data received by the National Study do.

Maltreatment

Table 6 shows the distribution of involved children for whom maltreatment information was available across categories of maltreatment. Information for both 1983 and 1984 is provided in order to highlight changes over time. Note that because a child could have experienced more than one type, the total is greater than 100 percent.

Table 6
Type of Maltreatment

Type of Maltreatment	Percent of Children 1984 (N = 304,993)[1]	1983 (N = 397,785)[2]
Major Physical Injury	3.3%	3.2%
Minor Physical Injury	17.7%	18.5%
Unspecified Physical Injury	3.6%	5.2%
Sexual Maltreatment	13.3%	8.5%
Deprivation of Necessities	54.6%	58.4%
Emotional Maltreatment	11.2%	10.1%
Other Maltreatment	9.6%	8.3%

[1] The distribution for 1984 is based on 16 states constituting 41 percent of the U.S. Child Population.
[2] The distribution for 1983 is based on 23 states constituting 46 percent of the U.S. Child Population.

The distribution of sexual abuse cases increased between 1983 and 1984, from approximately 9 percent to 13 percent of all maltreated children, and thus continued a trend identified in prior studies of National Study reporting data. Other less substantial increases occurred in the distribution of emotional maltreatment (11 percent) and "other maltreatment" (16 percent). "Other maltreatment" includes abandonment and forms of maltreatment which could not be included in the other categories.

The major decrease in the proportion of maltreatment occurred in the area of unspecified physical injury, resulting in a 31 percent decline. Since this category captures physical injury data not classified as major or minor, the decrease in conjunction with stable or declining proportions in major and minor physical injury categories indicates an overall decline in physical injury *as a proportion* of all maltreatment types.

As in 1983, the 1984 data show the continuation of a downward trend in the proportion of deprivation of necessities.

As is apparent from Table 7, estimates of the number of children sexually maltreated and the rate of sexual maltreatment have increased significantly between 1976 and 1984. In particular, the tremendous increase in 1984 in the proportion of sexual maltreatment translates into an increase of about 35 percent from 1983 in the estimated number of children who are reported as sexually maltreated throughout the country. This is not only due to growing public awareness, but is also associated with the expansion of definitions to include extra-familial abuse, the proliferation of sexual maltreatment programs and shifts in state and local policy to increase emphasis on reporting and investigating sexual maltreatment.

Table 7
National Estimate of Rates and Numbers of Children Reported as Sexually Maltreated

Year	Estimated No. of Children in Thousands	Rate Per 10,000 Children	Percent of U.S. Child Population From Which Rate Was Derived
1976	6	0.86	33%
1977	11	1.74	36%
1978	12	1.87	43%
1979	27	4.23	42%
1980	37	5.76	43%
1981	35	5.55	47%
1982	57	9.01	40%
1983	74	11.86	46%
1984	100	15.88[1]	41%

[1] The 95 percent Confidence Interval associated with this statistic is 13.77 to 21.61 per 10,000 children, and the error reflects state level variability among 16 states. The range of variation is 4.9 to 37.4 per 10,000 children. The point estimate for the rate is the total number of children indicated as sexually maltreated divided by the under 18 population.

Maltreatment Profiles

The following figures allow for the comparison of profiles of children for 1984 indicated as experiencing the seven maltreatment types defined in the National Study data base. Specifically, these are Major Physical Injury, Minor Physical Injury, Physical Injury of Unspecified Severity, Sexual Maltreatment, Emotional Maltreatment, Other Maltreatment and Deprivation of Necessities. A comparison of the associated maltreatment suggests the extent to which other maltreatments occur in conjunction with the primary maltreatment type.

In comparison with all maltreated children (see Figure 4), children who experience major physical injury (see Figure 5) are two years younger, somewhat more likely to be male, tend to be over-represented by blacks in contrast with all maltreated children, and are less likely to reside in a single-female-headed family. The most frequently indicated associated types of maltreatment are minor physical injury (18.5 percent) and deprivation of necessities (16.5 percent). Fewer white children are reported while a larger percentage of children from "other" minority categories are reported.

Figures 6 and 7 for Minor Physical Injury and Unspecified Injury show that these children are somewhat older and more likely to be male than all children who are maltreated. In comparison with Major Physical Injury, children with indications of other injuries appear to experience less associated maltreatment. The most frequently indicated type of maltreatment associated with minor physical injury is deprivation of necessities although it is less than 10 percent (8.9 percent). These children also have fewer unemployed caretakers.

Figure 4
Reported Characteristics For All Maltreated Children 1984

Average Age 7.29

Sex

Males	47.2%
Females	52.8%

Race

White	64.8%
Black	19.9%
Hispanic	12.4%
Other	2.8%

Relationship to Perpetrator

Own Child	84.6%
Other Relative	6.2%
Other	9.2%

Children in Household

Reported Children	2.1
All U.S.	1.9

Employment

Caretakers Unemployed	36.6%

Single Female Headed Families 37.08%

Type of Maltreatment

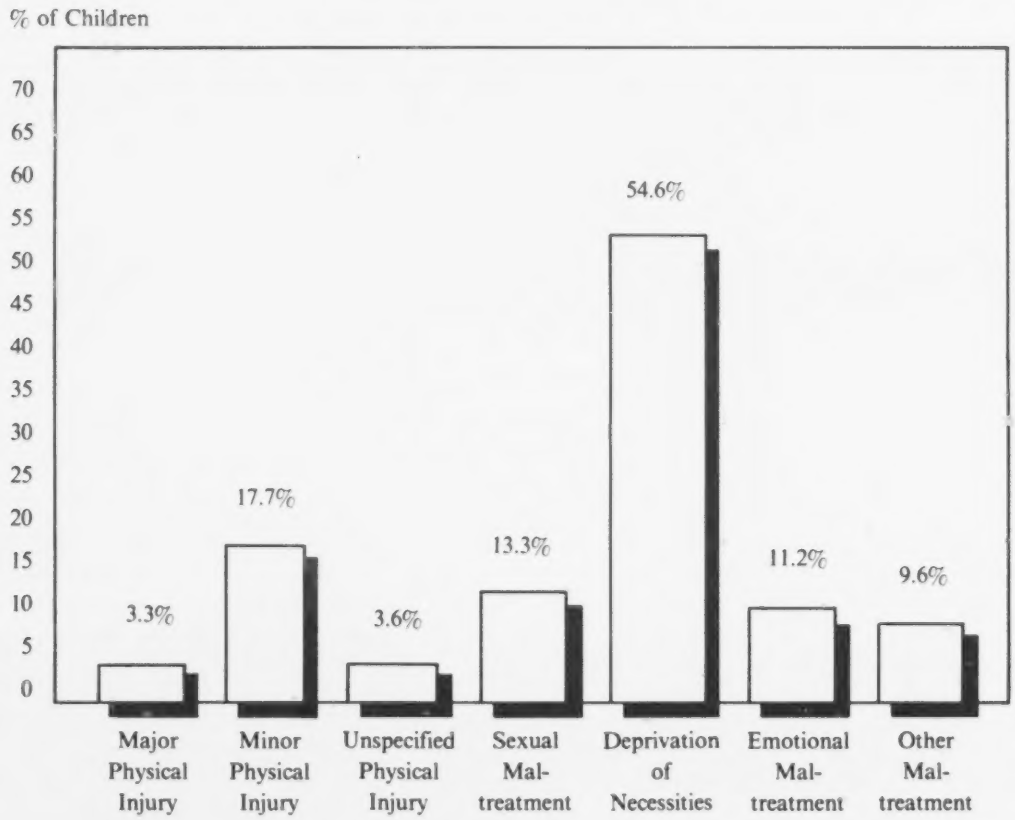


Figure 5
Reported Characteristics For Children With Major Physical Injuries 1984

Average Age 5.3

Sex

Males	54.2%
Females	45.8%

Race

White	57.5%
Black	21.9%
Hispanic	11.2%
Other	9.5%

Relationship to Perpetrator

Own Child	82.9%
Other Relative	5.1%
Other	12.1%

Children in Household

Reported Children	2.0
All U.S.	1.9

Employment

Caretakers Unemployed	37.4%

Single Female Headed Families 27.8%

Associated Type of Maltreatment

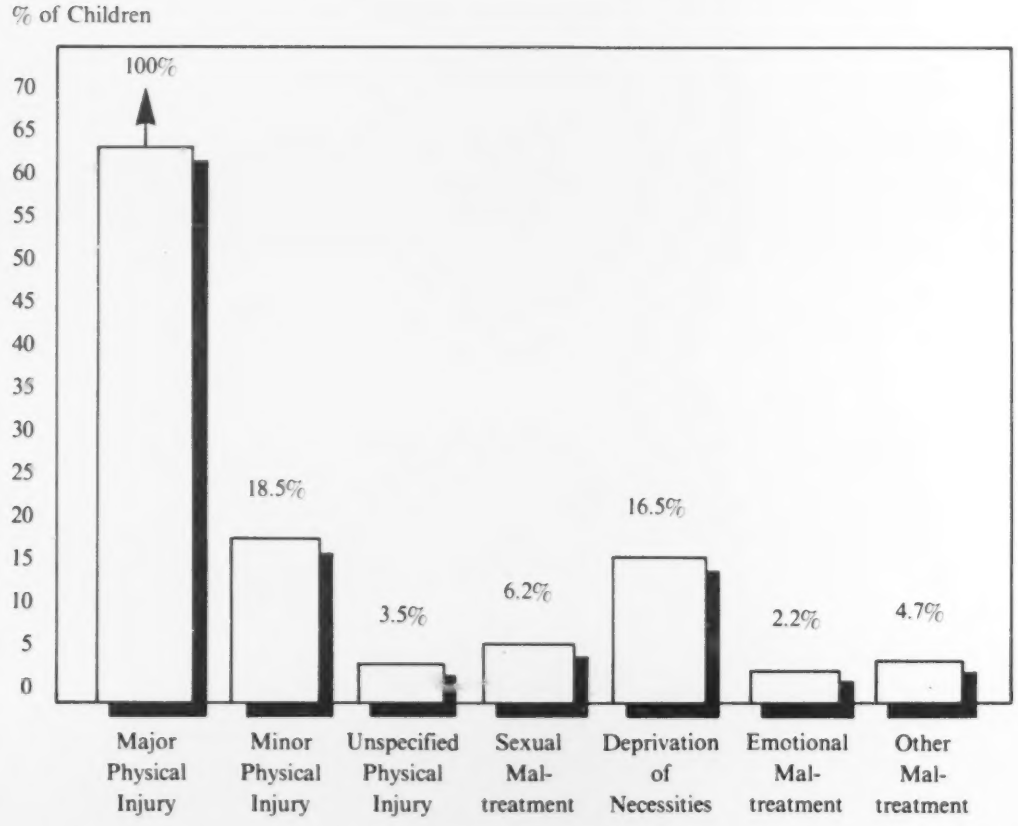


Figure 6
Reported Characteristics For Children With Minor Physical Injuries 1984

Average Age 8.01

Sex

Males	51.4%
Females	48.6%

Race

White	64.3%
Black	19.0%
Hispanic	13.7%
Other	3.1%

Relationship to Perpetrator

Own Child	82.6%
Other Relative	5.2%
Other	12.2%

Children in Household

Reported Children	2.1
All U.S.	1.9

Employment

Caretakers Unemployed	27.4%

Single Female Headed Families 26.20%

Associated Type of Maltreatment

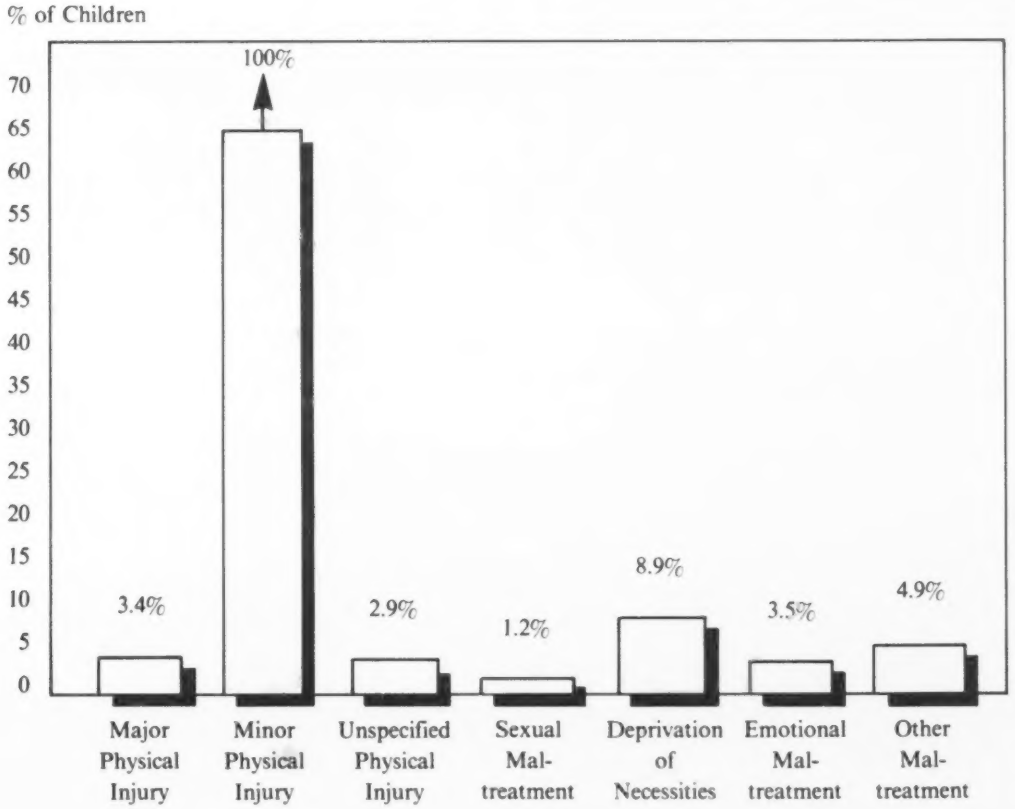


Figure 7
Reported Characteristics For Children With Unspecified Physical Injuries 1984

Average Age 8.45

Sex

Males	50.8%
Females	49.2%

Race

White	71.8%
Black	17.8%
Hispanic	4.2%
Other	6.3%

Relationship to Perpetrator

Own Child	86.6%
Other Relative	4.7%
Other	8.7%

Children in Household

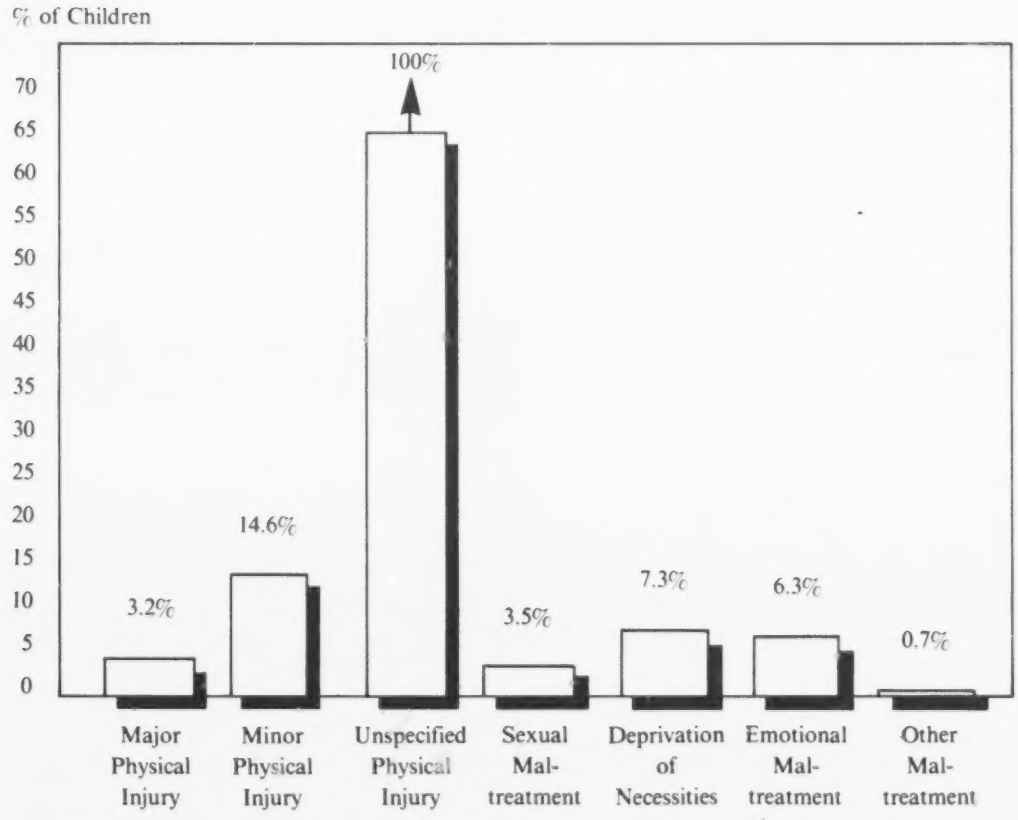
Reported Children	2.2
All U.S.	1.9

Employment

Caretakers Unemployed	37.5%

Single Female Headed Families 29.19%

Associated Type of Maltreatment



The profile for sexual maltreatment, Figure 8, differs considerably from that for all maltreated children across many of the categories. In particular, sexually maltreated children are two years older on average, much more likely to be female, more likely to be white, much less likely to be associated with a parent perpetrator, and less likely to reside in a household consisting of a single female caretaker. Similar to children with minor physical injuries, fewer caretakers are unemployed. The average number of children in the household is about the same as for all types of maltreatment. Surprisingly, few other types of maltreatment are indicated for sexually maltreated children and especially surprising is that the most common other form is deprivation of necessities. While the proportion of associated deprivation of necessities is relatively low, what makes its prevalence with respect to sexual maltreatment unusual is that the impoverished conditions associated with neglect are not as common in cases of sexual maltreatment. One possible explanation is that sexual maltreatment may be associated with neglect when the investigating worker defines deprivation of necessities as the inaction on the part of the caretaker to prevent the sexual abuse.

Turning to Emotional Maltreatment in Figure 9, the differences in comparison to all maltreated children are that children are close to a year older, are more often white children, there are slightly more children per household, and the cases have a greater percentage of parent perpetrators. A relatively large share (one-fourth) of emotionally maltreated children also experience some form of deprivation of necessities. One of the more peculiar aspects of the characteristics of the emotionally maltreated children is the relatively high proportion of whites. Although the proportion of whites is similar to that for unspecified physical injury and lower than sexual maltreatment, it is well above that for deprivation of necessities, the most commonly associated type of maltreatment.

Figure 8
Reported Characteristics For Sexually Maltreated Children 1984

Average Age 9.3

Sex

Males	21.7%
Females	78.3%

Race

White	74.7%
Black	13.0%
Hispanic	8.8%
Other	3.5%

Relationship to Perpetrator

Own Child	55.6%
Other Relative	18.7%
Other	25.7%

Children in Household

Reported Children	2.0
All U.S.	1.9

Employment

Caretakers Unemployed	27.7%

Single Female Headed Families 24.53%

Associated Type of Maltreatment

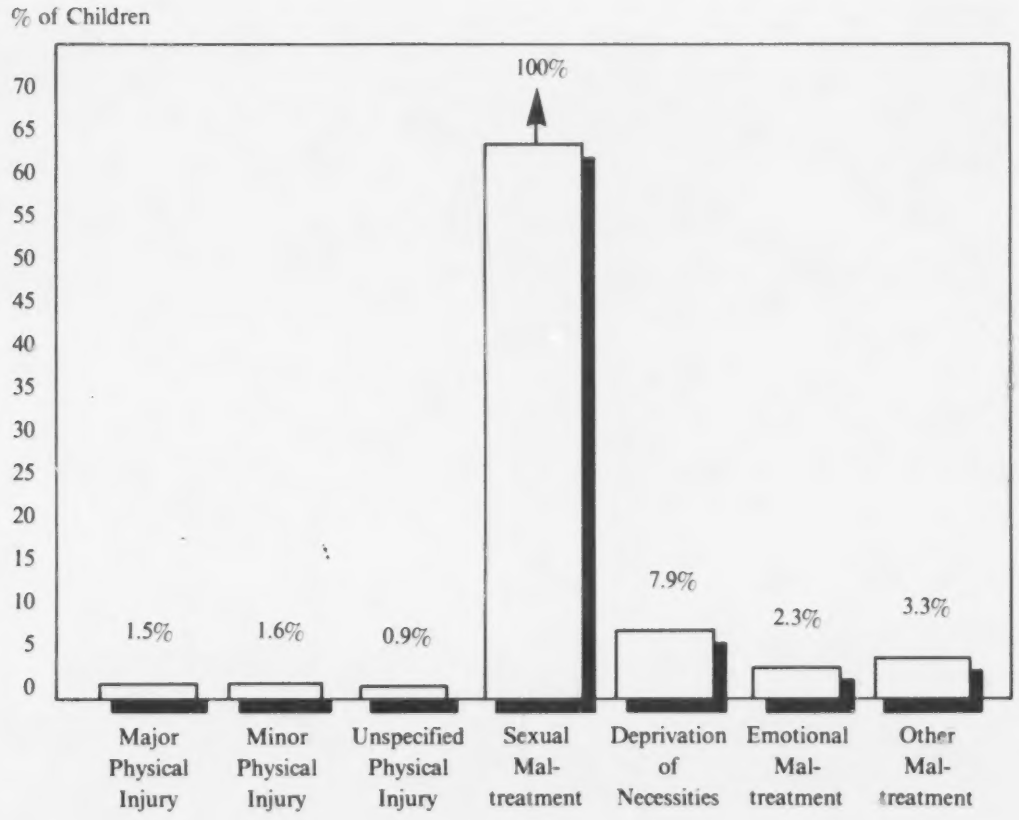


Figure 9
Reported Characteristics For Emotionally Maltreated Children 1984

Average Age 8.05

Sex

Males	48.3%
Females	51.7%

Race

White	71.4%
Black	12.8%
Hispanic	13.2%
Other	2.6%

Relationship to Perpetrator

Own Child	90.3%
Other Relative	3.4%
Other	6.3%

Children in Household

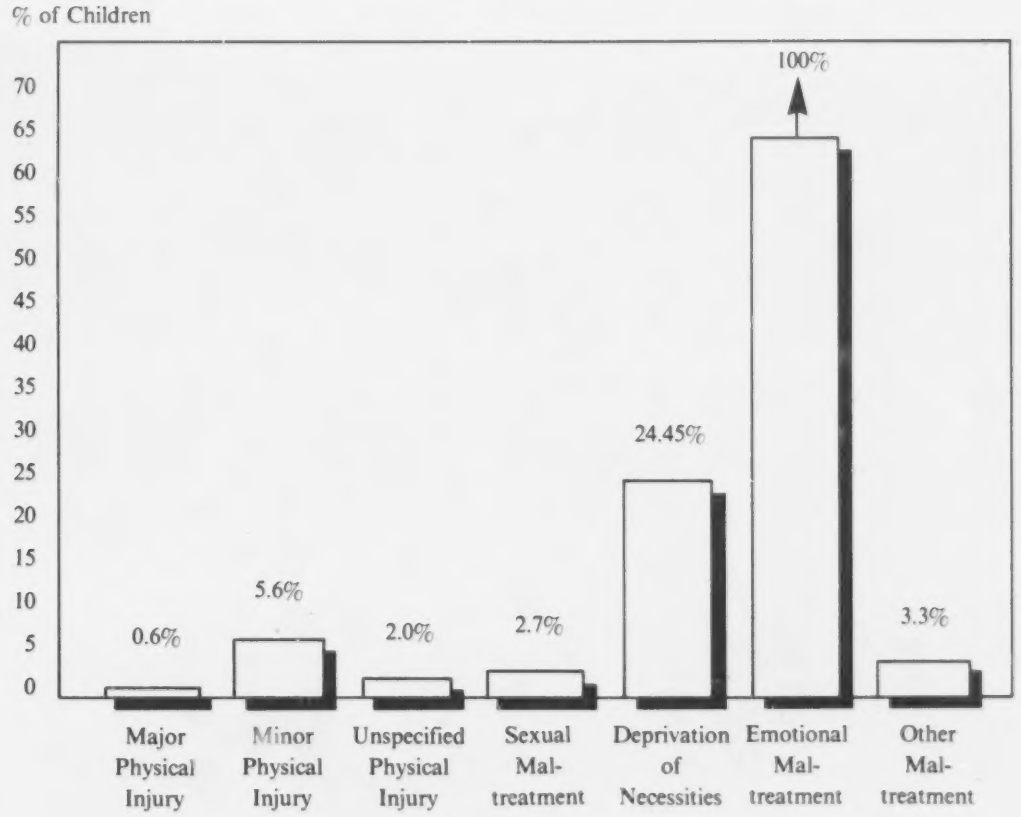
Reported Children	2.3
All U.S.	1.9

Employment

Caretakers Unemployed	35.1%

Single Female Headed Families 35.95%

Associated Type of Maltreatment



By contrast with sexual maltreatment and emotional maltreatment, children experiencing other maltreatment (see Figure 10) are much more likely to be black than are all maltreated children, but are just as likely to be male or female. Like those indicated as emotionally maltreated, they are more likely to have a parent perpetrator. A very large proportion, even greater than that for emotional maltreatment, are indicated as deprived of necessities (over one-third). While the other maltreatment category includes abandonment, it is difficult to offer any explanations without knowing more about the specific maltreatments involved.

The last profile in Figure 11 is the one for deprivation of necessities. With the exception of major physical injury, these children are slightly younger on average, slightly more are male, and are associated with a parent perpetrator. They are much more likely to reside in a single-female-headed household with a fairly high chance that at least one caretaker is unemployed. Very few of these children experience another form of maltreatment when compared with the other profile data. The most important single fact is that these children continue to be the single largest category of maltreatment and whose impact on the CPS system is most significant, yet in some ways least understood.

Figure 10
Reported Characteristics For Children With Other Maltreatment Types 1984

Average Age 7.26

Sex

Males	50.0%
Females	50.0%

Race

White	49.3%
Black	31.4%
Hispanic	15.9%
Other	3.4%

Relationship to Perpetrator

Own Child	89.9%
Other Relative	4.1%
Other	6.0%

Children in Household

Reported Children	2.2
All U.S.	1.9

Employment

Caretakers · Unemployed ·	38.0%

Single Female Headed Families 37.79%

Associated Type of Maltreatment

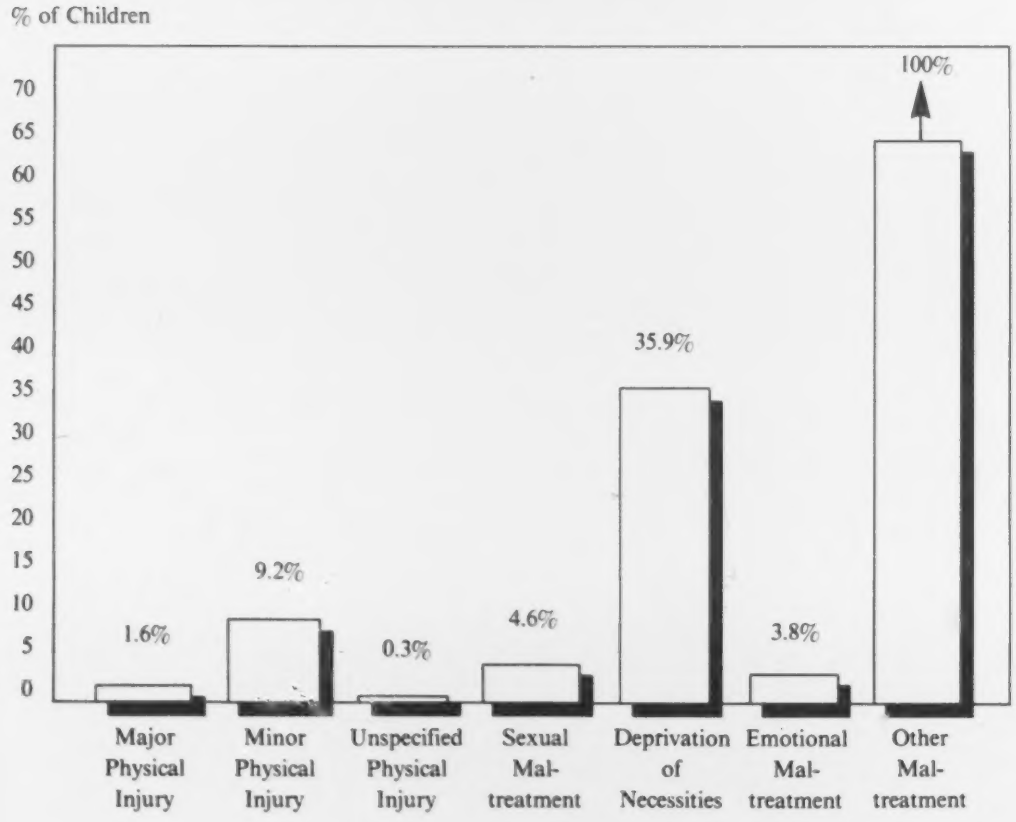


Figure 11
Reported Characteristics For Neglected* Children 1984

Average Age 6.41

Sex

Males	51.5%
Females	48.5%

Race

White	62.5%
Black	22.5%
Hispanic	12.9%
Other	2.2%

Relationship to Perpetrator

Own Child	91.3%
Other Relative	3.8%
Other	5.0%

Children in Household

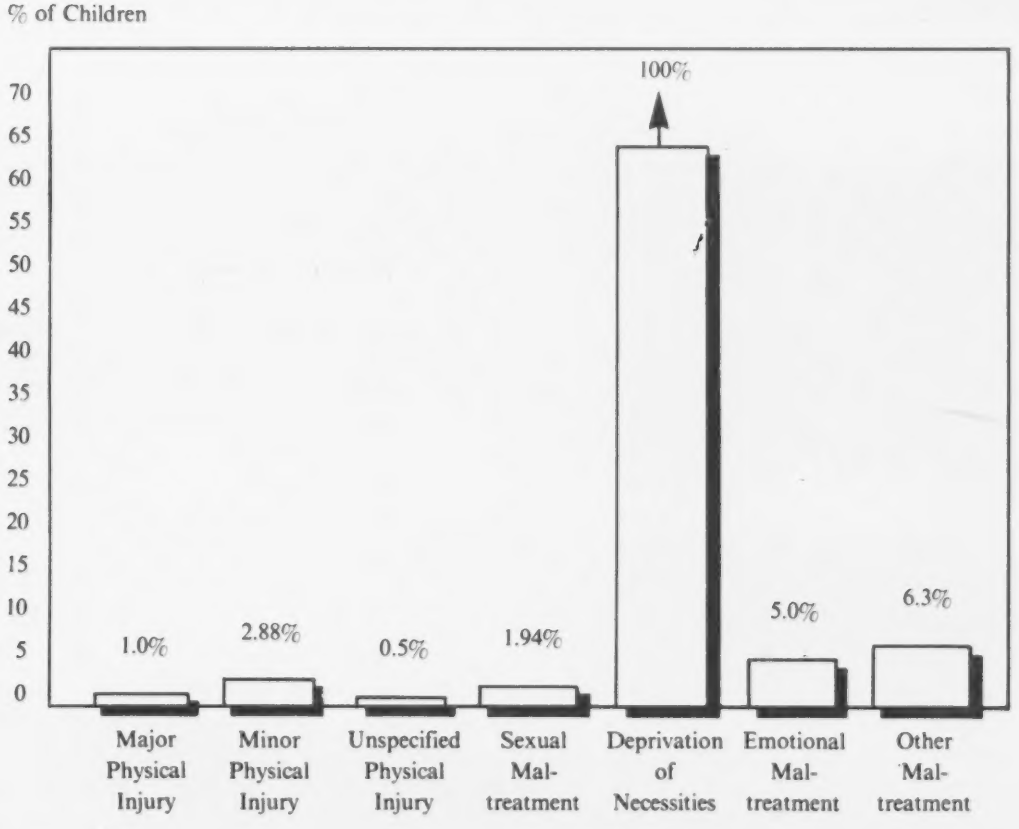
Reported Children	2.3
All U.S.	1.9

Employment

Caretakers	43.3%
Unemployed	

Single Female Headed Families 51.12%

Associated Type of Maltreatment



*National Study on Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting: MDS Category; "Deprivation of Necessities" (see Appendix B)

Characteristics of Deprivation of Necessities

Neglect has been over time the predominant type of report (58 percent of reported cases in 1984) and deprivation of necessities has been the major form of maltreatment identified (55 percent of maltreated children).

Although report type tends to reflect status at the time the report is received and maltreatment reflects the results of the investigation, the relative importance of these cases to CPS caseloads is similar. In this section, cases with children identified as having deprivation of necessities as a maltreatment are described and analyzed. In addition to representing investigative results, these cases also tend to be substantiated. Approximately 80 percent of the children identified with a maltreatment were substantiated by CPS workers in 1984.

Even though identifying one maltreatment type does not exclude others, the pattern in the data is that almost 75 percent of these cases have only that one type of maltreatment. When other maltreatments are present along with deprivation of necessities, they normally include emotional maltreatment, "other" maltreatment and minor physical injury.

Fatalities that result from child abuse and neglect are normally under-reported to CPS. Nonetheless, over the nine years of reporting, 1,491 children have died in connection with deprivation of necessities. In 1984, 44 percent of all maltreatment related fatalities were associated with deprivation of necessities. Although other maltreatments are sometimes also present, again even the majority of these fatalities have only deprivation of necessities identified as a maltreatment.

The average age of children deprived of necessities is about 6.4 years old, continuing the trend in recent years toward younger children. Children who die related to deprivation of necessities tend to be much younger — an average age of 3 years, which has also declined in recent years.

The source of reporting of deprivation of necessities is largely professional, but 39 percent are nonprofessionals. This is a rather consistent pattern over the nine years and represents a higher percentage of professionals than is true for all reports.

When deprivation of necessities is identified, it is overwhelmingly likely to come in on a report of neglect or neglect and abuse. In only about four percent of the deprivation of necessities cases has the initial report type been abuse.

When deprivation of necessities is identified, more families are receiving public assistance than the 48 percent for the whole body of reporting. The average for deprivation of necessities over nine years is 54 percent and 62 percent of these families were receiving public assistance in 1984. Clearly this is considerably higher than all reported families.

Single parents constitute an average of 54 percent of the deprivation of necessities cases, with single male parents being almost 10 percent of that 54 percent. Again, there are more single parents in this population than in total reporting.

The response of the CPS system to deprivation of necessities has varied considerably over time. Table 8 is the proportion of cases opened for protective services when deprivation of necessities was identified:

Table 8
Cases Involving Deprivation of Necessities Opened for Protective Services

Year	Percent of Cases Opened for Protective Services
1976	59%
1977	80%
1978	78%
1979	54%
1980	54%
1981	74%
1982	68%
1983	75%
1984	89%

One could argue that 100 percent should have been opened, considering that CPS identified the presence of deprivation of necessities. However, the proportion opened for services seems to be increasing over time, which may mean services are becoming more available to the families identified.

The type of services provided these cases is largely casework counseling but long term support services as well as crisis intervention services evidenced a slight proportional increase in recent years. Based on Table 9, between 1979 and 1983 these cases were more likely to go to court than were cases for all reported maltreatments. This trend was reversed in 1984 probably due to the large increase in sexual maltreatment cases.

Table 9
Comparison of Cases Receiving Court Action Over Time

Year	All Reported Maltreatments Receiving Court Action	Deprivation of Necessities Receiving Court Action
1976	22%	20%
1977	21%	21%
1978	20%	20%
1979	15%	18%
1980	14%	26%
1981	18%	25%
1982	20%	34%
1983	24%	33%
1984	30%	26%

The percentage differences would be even greater if the deprivation of necessities cases were excluded from the total of all reported maltreatments.

Neglect continued to be a major part of the CPS caseload. There seems to be some indication from the proportion of cases receiving court action and from the number of fatalities that these cases of deprivation of necessities may be very serious. The need to develop adequate measures of risk assessment in neglect is voiced by many CPS workers along with a need for defining effective services to these families.

Fatalities

Data on fatalities reported to CPS are available from 23 of the jurisdictions. The actual number of children who died in 1984 as a result of maltreatment is not available through this study. The characteristics of the 500 fatality cases available in the data are described and compared to all cases in this section.

Children who are reported as fatalities are much younger compared to all involved children — their average age is 2.6 versus 7.2 years. Males are slightly over-represented by comparison with all involved children, 54 percent of fatalities versus 48 percent of all reported children. The most frequently associated type of maltreatment is major physical injury, which is indicated for 47 percent of the fatalities, followed by deprivation of necessities (44 percent) and minor physical injury (21 percent).

The single largest group of reporting sources for fatalities is medical personnel (36 percent), followed by law enforcement (31 percent). In total, professional sources account for 80 percent of fatality reports compared to 50 percent of all child abuse and neglect reports.

In 69 percent of the reported fatality cases, both a male and female caretaker are present; in 28 percent, there is only a single female. This differs from all reported families: a male and female caretaker are present in 56 percent, a single female caretaker is present in 37 percent.

The characteristics of 1984 fatality cases show some changes over 1983. In terms of the distribution of maltreatment types, the percentage of fatalities reporting major physical injury has increased from 40 percent to 47 percent, whereas the percentage reporting neglect has declined from 52 percent to 44 percent of cases. In addition, the percentage of two-caretaker (male-female) households has increased from 59 percent to 69 percent. Professional sources have declined from 86 percent to 80 percent.

Characteristics of CPS Responses to Maltreatment Reports

Case Status

Case status refers to the judgment concerning what action protective services will take during or especially after an investigation of abuse or neglect. Among the alternative decisions made by child protective service workers is whether to provide services to the child and family. In some instances, even though maltreatment has occurred, such service may not be offered for a variety of reasons including the accessibility of the family and their willingness to accept service, the severity of the case, issues of state policy, and availability of resources. Table 10 shows the distribution of reports across the four categories of case status defined by this study. The "other" status category includes cases where the family could not be located or where cases were referred to services other than CPS.

Table 10
Case Status
(N=190,523 Reports)

Case Status	Percent of Reports
Currently Under Investigation	0.9%
Case Closed After Investigation	46.7%
Opened for Protective Services	48.7%
Other Status	3.7%
Total	**100.0%**

Case Status and Source of Report

Except for law enforcement personnel, "other" sources, and nonprofessionals, Table 11 demonstrates that the various report sources were evenly divided between "case closed after the investigation" and "opened for protective services." The difference in the total percentages betwen Table 10 and Table 11 are due to the exclusion of some states in Table 11 owing to incompatible or missing source of report data. Reports by law enforcement were most likely to result in protective services (55 percent); those made by "other" sources, which includes anonymous reporters, were least likely to do so (24 percent). As noted previously, nonprofessionals were the largest single group of reporting sources; however, their reports were less likely to result in protective services compared to all the professional groups. This lower level of service provision for reports by nonprofessionals does not necessarily imply that reports from such sources are less likely to be valid. Other conditions, such as bias in the reporting system toward professionals, or the nature and completeness of reports by nonprofessionals, may also be operating.

Table 11
Case Status and Source of Report
(N = 133,518)

	Maltreated Children							
Status	**Medical Personnel (N = 12,342)**	**School Personnel (N = 15,559)**	**Social Services (N = 15,766)**	**Law Enforcement (N = 12,123)**	**Child Care (N = 3,319)**	**Non-Professionals (N = 54,444)**	**Other (N = 19,965)**	**Percent of All Reports**
Currently Under Investigation	1.2%	1.3%	1.1%	1.2%	0.7%	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%
Case Closed After Investigation	50.5%	49.7%	50.8%	40.5%	53.3%	61.2%	71.3%	57.1%
Protective Services	45.9%	46.4%	44.6%	55.2%	44.7%	34.6%	23.7%	38.7%
Other	2.4%	2.6%	3.5%	3.1%	1.3%	3.1%	3.8%	3.0%
Total	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Case Status and Type of Maltreatment

Table 12 for 1984 reflects data from states where maltreatment indications were made only as a result of an investigation and it is normally at this point that the decision to provide services is made. By comparison with 1983, the percent of all maltreated children receiving protective services was 62.8 percent versus the revised percentage of 87.7 percent in 1984. However, even in the presence of this more restricted definition of maltreatment in 1984, about 10 percent of cases with identified maltreatment continue to be closed after the investigation.

Although comparisons of distribution levels with prior years may be inappropriate, the relationships between maltreatment and case status are consistent between 1983 and 1984 (AAPC, 1985, p. 20). Emotional maltreatment is still the most likely to be opened for services (95.4 percent) followed by sexual maltreatment (88.7 percent) and deprivation of necessities (88.7 percent).

Table 12
Type of Maltreatment and Case Status

	Maltreated Children							
Case Status	**Major Physical Injury (N = 4,299)**	**Minor Physical Injury (N = 13,626)**	**Unspecified Physical Injury (N = 14,153)**	**Sexual Maltreatment (N = 19,218)**	**Deprivation of Necessities (N = 48,930)**	**Emotional Maltreatment (N = 7,957)**	**Other Maltreatment (N = 3,089)**	**Percent of All Maltreated Children[1] (N = 99,780)**
Currently Under Investigation	0.8%	1.4%	0.2%	0.8%	0.7%	1.1%	0.8%	0.7%
Closed After Investigation	7.1%	10.3%	11.6%	7.7%	10.1%	3.0%	12.9%	10.0%
Open for Protective Services	84.9%	82.2%	87.7%	88.7%	88.7%	95.4%	85.9%	87.7%
Other Status	7.2%	5.1%	0.5%	2.8%	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%	1.6%
Total	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

[1] The number of children for each category of maltreatment does not equal the total number of children since a child may experience more than one maltreatment type.

Services Provided

The distribution of reports across categories of services is shown in Table 13. Note that "casework counseling" refers to continued involvement on the part of a CPS worker with the family and encompasses a variety of activities. Immediate or short-term crisis services include emergency medical care and emergency shelter care. Long-term services include, as example, foster care, homemaker and day care services. Fifty-one percent of the cases received two or more categories of services.

Since 1980 the percentage of services involving court action has increased from 13.7 percent to 30.2 percent in 1984. This represents an average increase of 30 percent in the use of the court per year. Court action can mean any activity from filing a petition through criminal prosecution; it is an inclusive category. This increase may reflect the general trend toward more emphasis on law enforcement and legalistic approaches to child protective services. It may also be due to the increased level of sexual maltreatment as these cases are more likely to receive court action.

Table 13
Services Provided
(N=29,138 Reports)

Services	Percentage of Reports
Investigation Only/Services Planned	3.56%
Casework Counseling	73.94%
Court Action Initiated	30.24%
Immediate or Short-Term Crisis Services	10.25%
Long-Term or Support Services	55.58%
Other Services	2.65%

Beginning with 1984, a subset of the case activity is available for analysis covering court action, placement, and health services, which includes a larger number of states and is therefore likely to be more representative. Placement services include foster care and out-of-home placement. Health services include both physical and mental health services.

Among cases which were opened for protective services, the rates of provisions of these activities is shown in Table 14.

Table 14
Rates of Provision for Selected Services
Among Opened Cases

Court Action (N=138,852 cases)	Placement (N=89,078 cases)	Health Care (N=53,696 cases)
29.8%	17.7%	30.2%

As is evident from Tables 13 and 14, the percentage at about 30 percent for court action is consistent even though the number of cases in Table 15 is almost five times greater. The 17.7 percent receiving placement services is suggestive of a higher rate than was reported in 1982 and 1983 (AAPC, 1985; American Humane, 1984).

Summary and Conclusions

There were 1,726,649 children reported nationwide in 1984. This represents an increase of 17 percent since 1983 and an increase of 158 percent since 1976.

This volume of children reported for child abuse and neglect represents a monumental effort on the part of communities to identify children needing protection as well as an enormous demand on CPS systems nationwide to investigate the reports and provide protective services. Although data are not available, it is clear that the resources of CPS agencies have not increased 158 percent since 1976.

The rate of reporting has shown an even larger increase from 10.1 children for every 1,000 U.S. children in 1976, to 27.3 children reported in 1984 for every 1,000 U.S. children.

Yet even this enormous volume of reporting does not yet approach the number of actual child victims estimated through survey research. The recent Gelles and Strauss analysis based on the Louis Harris survey methods suggests there were 1.5 million children subjected to severe physical violence within their families in 1985 — seven times the number reported and identified as physically injured by CPS agencies nationwide.

There continues to be a significant variation in reporting rates from state to state that speaks more to large discrepancies in levels of resources, public awareness, and policy and practice variations rather than to simply differences in actual numbers of abused and neglected children.

The capacity of states to provide computerized case data on child maltreatment has continued to grow over the years. In spite of the National Study's not being able to analyze noncomputerized individual case reports, 30 states were able to provide computer tapes of their data to the study encompassing 737,774 individual children reported. This represents 43 percent of total reporting nationwide.

The analysis of data for 1984 in general reflects a growing sophistication in understanding of the data and data systems extant in the states. The care taken in comparing and interpreting data appropriately based on this growing sophistication lends more confidence to the findings.

The major patterns in the 1984 data can be summarized as follows:

- Although neglect still constitutes 58 percent of total reporting, as a percentage of all reporting it is declining proportional to abuse. This is only a relative decrease; total reporting of neglect as well as abuse is rising.
- Professionals are reporting 50 percent of the cases, a rising trend.
- CPS systems are substantiating about 42 percent of the cases and 90 percent of the substantiated cases were open for protective services.
- The average age of the involved children is 7 years old; there are slightly more female than male children reported.
- Whites are under-represented in the reporting data, and racial characteristics of families are consistent over time.

- Almost half the families reported are receiving public assistance.
- The average age of perpetrators is 31.5 years, consistent over time.
- 43 percent of the children reported are under six years old.
- 37 percent of the families reported have a single female caretaker.
- There has been a 35 percent increase in sexual abuse reports between 1983 and 1984.
- Almost half of the cases reported were opened for protective services with those reported by professionals consistently more likely to be opened.
- Maltreatment profiles indicate the presence of distinct characteristics in children and families depending on the maltreatment indicated.
- 10 percent of cases with maltreatments identified as a result of CPS investigations are closed after investigation.
- Emotional maltreatment, when identified, has the largest proportion of cases opened for protective services compared to other types of maltreatment.
- Court action has increased from 14 percent of the services provided in 1980 to 30 percent in 1984.
- 18 percent of those cases served result in foster care or out-of-home placement.

At the public policy level there are a number of issues related to child abuse and neglect reporting that these findings address. First, the need to continue to identify cases is clearly demonstrated by the data. Additionally, in conjunction with the findings from survey research into incidence, there are many more maltreated children in the U.S. than those that currently come to the attention of CPS agencies. Therefore, in spite of the increase of 158 percent in reported children since 1976, we need to anticipate even greater increases in order to achieve the legal mandate in every state that children in need of protection from abuse and neglect be reported.

Secondly, the issue is often raised as to the appropriateness of reports to CPS. Although an increasing number of reports are substantiated, only 43 percent of all reports in 1984 were substantiated. The reporting data is not adequate to address the factors relating to the decision to substantiate. Other data indicates the presence and acceleration of procedures for prioritizing and screening reports. This may be having an effect; with more restricted definitional criteria, it appears that in 90 percent of the cases with an identified maltreatment protective services are provided. If those that are identified are to be served, it may be that screening procedures have to reflect system capacity as well as the need for protective services. It may also be that over time communities are slowly getting better at identifying cases. Yet it is still disturbing that 40 percent or more of the cases that **professionals** report to CPS are not substantiated.

The service response is to increasingly utilize the court. This is a definite pattern over time and needs to be analyzed further to understand its implications. Almost 18 percent of the cases served result in foster care and out-of-home placement. This data does not allow us to come to conclusions regarding the availability of in-home services as an alternative to placement, but clearly indicates the level of demand on the court and foster care systems which accompanies the increased levels of reporting.

The resources of CPS systems are taxed. For each year of increased reporting, the need to not simply identify but also to treat and protect is a costly process. Yet the need is not decreasing and public and private resources must be committed appropriately in order to anticipate a time when most families can protect their own children and maltreatment does not get passed down through the generations. Unless we provide the currently increasing numbers of abused and neglected children and their families with truly ameliorative treatment services, it is hard to know when that time will come.

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Appendices

A. Data Items and Response Categories for the National Study Data Base

B. Case Data Participants

C. Information Source and Distributional Characteristics of National Reporting Statistics

APPENDIX A

DATA ITEMS AND RESPONSE CATEGORIES FOR THE NATIONAL STUDY DATA BASE

Case and Family Descriptors

A. DATE OF INITIAL REPORT

1. Date

B. DATE CASE STATUS DETERMINED

1. Date

C. LOCATION

1. State or statecode
2. County or countycode
3. District code

D. NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN HOME

1. Number

E. SOURCE OF INITIAL REPORT

1. Medical personnel
   a. Private physician
   b. Clinic or hospital physician
   c. Other medical personnel
   d. Unspecified/mixed school personnel
2. School personnel
   a. School nurse
   b. Teacher
   c. Principal
   d. Other school personnel
   e. Unspecified/mixed medical personnel
3. Social service personnel
   a. Social worker
   b. Mental health personnel
   c. Institutional staff
   d. Other social service personnel
   e. Unspecified/mixed social service personnel
4. Law enforcement personnel
   a. Police
   b. Courts, attorneys
   c. Parole, probation officer
   d. Emergency service personnel
   e. Other law enforcement personnel
   f. Unspecified/mixed law enforcement personnel

5. Nonprofessionals
   a. Friend, neighbor
   b. Victim
   c. Responsible caretaker
   d. Perpetrator/self report
   e. Other family member/relative
   f. Other nonprofessional
   g. Unspecified/mixed nonprofessionals
6. Child care providers
   a. Day care center
   b. Preschool/nursery school
   c. Day care home
   d. Babysitter
   e. Other child care providers
   f. Unspecified/mixed child care providers
7. Other source of report
   a. Anonymous
   b. Other
   c. Unspecified/mixed source of report
8. Unknown

F. CASE STATUS

1. Currently under investigation
2. Case closed after investigation
3. Protective services provided
4. Other case status
   a. Case referred for services other than protective
   b. Cannot locate family
   c. Other
   d. Unspecified/mixed case status
5. Unknown

G. SERVICES PROVIDED OR ARRANGED
(maximum of four responses are allowed per report)

1. Investigation only — services expected/planned
2. Casework counseling
3. Court action initiated
4. Immediate or short-term crisis services
   a. Emergency shelter
   b. Immediate medical services
   c. Unspecified/mixed short-term crisis services
5. Long-term or support services
   a. Foster care or out-of-home placement
   b. Ongoing health services
   c. Day care
   e. Budgeting/home management services

f. Mental health services/counseling
g. Employment services
h. Housing assistance
i. Parents Anonymous or community self-help groups
j. Legal services
k. Parenting education
l. Church/neighborhood assistance
m. Financial/public assistance
n. Unspecified/mixed long-term support services

6. Other services
   a. Other
   b. Unspecified/mixed services provided or arranged
7. Family refused services
8. None
9. Unknown

H. TYPE OF REPORT

1. Abuse
   a. Abuse unsubstantiated
   b. Abuse substantiated
   c. Abuse-substantiation unspecified
2. Neglect
   a. Neglect unsubtantiated
   b. Neglect substantiated
   c. Neglect-substantiation unspecified
3. Abuse and neglect
   a. Abuse/neglect unsubstantiated
   b. Abuse/neglect substantiated
   c. Abuse/neglect-substantiation unspecified
4. Report type unspecifed
   a. Unsubstantiated, report type unspecified
   b. Substantiated, report type unspecified
   c. Nonspecified substantiation and report type
5. Other report type
   a. At risk
   b. Other
6. Unknown

I. FAMILY PUBLIC ASSISTANCE STATUS
(a maximum of three responses are allowed)

1. Receiving public assistance
   a. Receiving AFDC
   b. Receiving SSI
   c. Receiving food stamps
   d. Receiving Medicaid, Medicare
   e. Receiving WIN
   f. Receiving other public assistance
   g. Receiving unspecified/mixed public assistance

2. Not receiving public assistance
3. Unknown

J. FAMILY STRESS FACTORS
(a maximum of six responses are allowed for each case)

1. Health problems
   a. Alcohol/drug dependency
   b. Medical/physical disability of caretaker
   c. Medical/physical disability of child
   d. Mental retardation of caretaker
   e. Mental retardation of child
   f. Mental/emotional health problem of caretaker
   g. Mental/emotional health problem of child
   h. Other health problems
   i. Unspecified/mixed health problems
2. Economic or physical living conditions
   a. Inadequate housing
   b. Social isolation
   c. Job-related problems
   d. Insufficient income
   e. Transient or unstable living situation
   f. Mismanagement of income
   g. Other economic or physical living condition problems
   h. Unspecified/mixed economic or physical living conditions
4. Other stress factors
   a. Other
   b. Unspecified/mixed stress factors
5. None
6. Unknown

Responsible Caretaker and Perpetrator Descriptors

A. RESPONSIBLE CARETAKER AGE

1. Age in years

B. RESPONSIBLE CARETAKER SEX

1. Male
2. Female
3. Unknown

C. RESPONSIBLE CARETAKER RACE

1. White
2. Black
3. Hispanic
4. Other race
   a. Asian
   b. Native American
   c. Alaskan Native

d. Other
e. Unspecified/mixed other race

5. Unknown

D. RESPONSIBLE CARETAKER EMPLOYMENT STATUS

1. Employed full-time
2. Unemployed
3. Other employment status
   a. Employed less than full-time
   b. Temporary employment
   c. Student, not in labor force
   d. Homemaker, not in labor force
   e. Disabled, not in labor force
   f. Unspecified/mixed other employment status
4. Unknown

E. PERPETRATOR AGE

1. Age in years

F. PERPETRATOR SEX

1. Male
2. Female
3. Unknown

G. PERPETRATOR RACE

1. White
2. Black
3. Hispanic
4. Other race
   a. Asian
   b. Native American
   c. Other
   d. Unspecified/mixed other race
5. Unknown

Child Data

A. CHILD AGE

1. Age in years

B. CHILD SEX

1. Male
2. Female
3. Unknown

C. CHILD RACE

1. White
2. Black
3. Hispanic
4. Other race
   a. Asian
   b. Native American

c. Alaskan Native
d. Other
e. Unspecified/mixed other race

5. Unknown

D. CHILD RELATIONSHIP TO RESPONSIBLE CARETAKER

1. Parental
   a. Natural
   b. Step
   c. Adoptive
   d. Foster
   e. Unspecified/mixed parental relationship
2. Other relative
   a. Sibling
   b. Grandchild
   c. Other relative
   d. Unspecified/mixed other relative
3. Other relationship
   a. Boyfriend/girlfriend of parent
   b. State institution
   c. Private institution
   d. Other
   e. Unspecified/mixed other caretaker relationship
4. Unknown

E. CHILD RELATIONSHIP TO PERPETRATOR

1. Parental
   a. Natural
   b. Step
   c. Adoptive
   d. Foster
   e. Unspecified/mixed parental relationship
2. Other relative
   a. Sibling
   b. Grandchild
   c. Other relative
   d. Unspecified/mixed other relative
3. Other relationship
   a. Boyfriend/girlfriend of parent
   b. State institutional staff
   c. Private institutional staff
   d. Babysitter
   e. Teacher
   f. Neighbor/friend of parent
   g. No relationship
   h. Other
   i. Unspecified/mixed other perpetrator relationship
4. Unknown

F. TYPE OF MALTREATMENT

(maximum of five responses are allowed for each child)

1. Major physical injury
   a. Brain damage/skull fracture
   b. Subdural hemorrhage or hematoma
   c. Bone fracture
   d. Dislocation/sprains
   e. Internal injuries
   f. Poisoning
   g. Burns/scalds
   h. Severe cuts/lacerations/bruises
   i. Other major physical injury
   j. Unspecified/mixed major physical injuries
2. Minor physical injury
   a. Minor cuts/bruises/welts
   b. Twisting/shaking
   c. Other minor injury
   d. Unspecified/mixed minor physical injuries
3. Physical injury, severity unspecified
   a. Unspecified/mixed physical injury
4. Sexual maltreatment
   a. Incest
   b. Exploitation
   c. Rape/intercourse
   d. Molestation
   e. Other sexual maltreatment
   f. Unspecified/mixed sexual maltreatment
5. Deprivation of necessities
   a. Neglecting to provide nourishment
   b. Neglecting to provide shelter
   c. Neglecting to provide clothing
   d. Neglecting to provide health care
   e. Failure to thrive
   f. Lack of supervision
   g. Educational neglect
   h. Unspecified/mixed deprivation of necessities
6. Emotional maltreatment
   a. Emotional abuse
   b. Emotional neglect
   c. Unspecified/mixed emotional maltreatment
7. Other maltreatment
   a. Abandonment
   b. Other
   c. Unspecified/mixed maltreatment
8. No maltreatment
9. Noninvolved child
10. Unknown

G. FATALITY

1. Fatal
2. Nonfatal
3. Unknown

Appendix B

Case Data Participants

Report Totals of Case Data Participants

	Total
Alaska	4,405[1]
Arkansas	12,584
Colorado	6,112
District of Columbia	2,299
Florida	124,036[1]
Hawaii	3,251
Illinois	41,780
Indiana	19,672
Iowa	16,431
Kentucky	25,049
Maine	5,425
Massachusetts	23,625[1]
Michigan	38,288
Mississippi	4,323
Missouri	26,784
Nebraska	6,107
Nevada	6,063
New York	63,600
North Carolina	16,..05
Oklahoma	9,4[illegible]2
Pennsylvania	20,085[1]
South Carolina	3,710
Tennessee	30,388[1]
Texas	63,206
Utah	9,141
Vermont	2,128
Virginia	11,339[1]
Wisconsin	14,623
Wyoming	1,990
Puerto Rico	4,159
Total	**616,310[2]**

[1] Represents individual child reports as opposed to family reports.

[2] The states contributing to this total contain 61 percent of the U.S. child population (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1985, P-25, 970).

Appendix C

Information Source and Distributional Characteristics of National Reporting Statistics

Table C1
Information Source for Family Reports

Source of State Totals	Source Codes	Frequency	Percent	Cum Percent
Estimate by state	1	9	16.4	16.4
State computer system	2	20	36.4	52.7
State hand count	3	6	10.9	63.6
State jurisdiction count	4	3	5.5	69.1
State family/child ratio	5	1	1.8	70.9
Last year's figures	6	2	3.6	74.5
National family/child ratio	7	13	23.6	98.2
State data file	10	1	1.8	100.0
	Total	**55**	**100.0**	

Information Source for Child Reports

Source of State Totals	Source Codes	Frequency	Percent	Cum Percent
Estimate by state	1	2	3.6	3.6
State computer system	2	23	41.8	45.5
State hand count	3	4	7.3	52.7
State jurisdiction count	4	2	3.6	56.4
State family/child ratio	5	7	12.7	69.1
Last year's figures	6	2	3.6	72.7
National family/child ratio	7	12	21.8	94.5
Source unknown from state	8	1	1.8	96.4
Founded cases only	9	1	1.8	98.2
State data file	10	1	1.8	100.0
	Total	**55**	**100.0**	

Table C2
Distributional Characteristics of Reporting Rates

	All States (n=51)	States Which Provide Case Data (n=29)	States Which Do Not Provide Case Data (n=22)
Average Reporting Rate per 1,000 Children	27.85	26.71	29.35
Standard Deviation	10.54	11.08	9.84
Range	48.23	48.23	43.44